

Family Caregiver

Sharing Information & Giving Support to Hawai'i's Family Caregivers

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HGP Strong on Caregiver Education

The purpose of the Honolulu Gerontology Program (HGP) Caregiver Support Group is to provide education and support to family caregivers of elderly persons age 60 years and older. The group meets for two hours, one Friday and Saturday per month, usually on the fourth weekend. During the first hour, a speaker gives a presentation on a topic of interest to caregivers, and during the second hour, the caregivers are able to share their situations as well as to give and receive support from others in the group.

Recent topics of interest have included fall prevention; adult day care services and Kupuna Care; financial assistance; legal issues; Medicare approved drug discount cards; care home/nursing home placement; and dealing with challenging behaviors. Caregivers are encouraged to suggest subjects of interest for future presentations. Often, there are lively discussions and caregivers are able to interact with the presenters and have many of their questions answered. The group has been fortunate to have so many dedicated professionals willing to share their time and knowledge.

Over the years, the group has attracted an interesting mix of caregivers, including adult children and grandchildren, spouses, nieces, nephews, sisters and brothers and family friends. Some folks attend the group every month and others when they are able. Newcomers are often surprised and always comforted to find others in similar or sometimes even more difficult caregiving situa-



Featured Caregiver Support Group

HONOLULU GERONTOLOGY PROGRAM CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP (HGP)

PHONE: 543-8468

tions. Experienced caregivers regularly have some excellent tips to share.

This caregiver group has a long history and was first established in 1985 when HGP was located at the Honolulu Medical Group. In 2002, a Saturday group was added to accommodate working caregivers who were unable to attend during regular work hours. Currently, the Caregiver Support Group is part of the HGP 'Ohana Care Program and funding comes from the National Family Caregiver Support Program of the Older American's Act

as administered by the Elderly Affairs Division of the City and County of Honolulu. The group facilitator has a master's degree in Social Work with experience in working with groups and caregivers of the elderly, and is assisted by capable co-facilitators.

The meetings are held at HGP, located at Child & Family Service, 200 North Vineyard Blvd., Bldg. B, from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. While there is no fee to attend, a voluntary contribution of \$2 per session is encouraged. Upcoming meetings will feature topics such as medication management, the Medicaid Long Term Care Waiver Program, and the causes and effects of memory impairment in the elderly. If you are a caregiver and would like to join us or be placed on the mailing list, please call HGP at 543-8468.

Where Do I Start?

The best place to start in getting information on caregiver services in your community is your county office on aging. They can be reached at the following numbers:

Honolulu Elderly Affairs Division
523-4545

Kaua'i Agency on Elderly Affairs
241-4470

Maui County Office on Aging
270-7755

Hawai'i County Office on Aging
961-8600 (Hilo)
327-3597 (Kona)



H O N O L U L U

Caregiving Relationships

Many family members act as primary caregivers of long-term care to their frail and impaired parents and other older relatives who are in need of assistance. This is becoming an emerging societal issue as more people are living longer and experiencing extended periods of illness or disability. It also becomes a very personal issue.

In large families, conflicts often happen whether you've taken on the role of a primary or secondary caregiver for one or more parents. Below are some areas of potential conflicts that families should be aware of:

- Healthcare decisions. Who provides care, what care is needed, and who makes medical decisions.
- Financial decisions. How should money be spent, how should

investments be handled, how will concerns about unwise spending be handled.

- Living arrangements. Where, with whom and how much supervision is needed.
- Communication issues. Who has legal authority to access information, and how will it be shared with those who need it.
- Family relationship issues. How should families deal with sibling rivalries and other changes in relationships.
- Decision making. Who should have authority to make decisions and what input should others have, including the care receiver.
- Safety issues. What are the identified risks.

Respite care/support for caregivers.

Not all conflicts are bad, but sometimes it's hard to see another person's viewpoint when caring for a loved one. The following are some suggestions to resolve conflicts in a positive way:

- Plan ahead. Take time to talk things over.
- Develop good listening skills.
- Try role reversal.
- Gather needed information.
- Involve the care receiver and respect the wishes of the care receiver as much as possible.

When families are unable to resolve caregiving problems, it may become necessary to involve a neutral, third party. Support groups are also a great way to share problem solving issues where members talk about how they were able to resolve a similar conflict.

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E LOA KE OLA



MAY LIFE
BE LONG

The Executive Office on Aging is the state agency whose mission is to promote dignity and independence of older adults, and to help prepare for the rapid expansion of Hawai'i's aging population.

Phone: 808-586-0100
www2.state.hi.us/eoa

Linda Lingle
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**Chiyome Leinaala
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Robert Takushi
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Board for Elder Affairs

Pat Sasaki
Executive Director
Executive Office on Aging

Wes Lum
Caregiver Resource Initiative
Project Coordinator

Upcoming & etc...

Seminar on Dementia Care

Saturday, April 9, 2005

9:00am - noon

Central Union Church

For more information, call Deborah

Jackson, Eldercare Hawai'i, 988-6300.

Join Alex Au from Franciscan Adult Day Care and David Fitzgerald from Hale Kuike for an informative workshop on dementia care.

Caring For Family, Caring For Yourself: A Caregivers Conference

Saturday, August 27, 2005

Sheraton Waikiki

For more information or to receive an application call 523-4545.

Family Caregiver Training Program

Presented by the Franciscan Adult Day Center and Eldercare Hawai'i, this program will be held over four Saturday sessions (dates to be announced). Top local experts will provide personal training and support in the following areas: Introduction-Aging & Caregiving; Personal Care, Nursing Skills and Medication Management; Safety & Mobility, Falls and Falls Prevention; End of Life Care, Grief and Loss. Call Deborah at 988-6300 for information and registration. FREE for family caregivers. Space is limited and pre-registration is required. (This program is partly funded by a Title III federal grant administered through the Elderly Affairs Division, City and County of Honolulu.)



We provide access to our activities without regard to race, color, national origin (including language), age, sex, religion, or disability. Write or call EOA or the DOH Affirmative Action Officer at Box 2278, Honolulu, HI 96801 or at 808-586-4616 (voice/tty) within 180 days of a problem.

Helping a Doctor Help You

by Keoni Kealoha Devereaux, Jr., PhD
Vice-President of Programs,
Alzheimer's Association-Aloha Chapter

If you are an Alzheimer's disease caregiver, you play a key role in making sure that your loved one receives appropriate medical care. You may be the best person to report any significant changes to their doctor. You need to monitor medications and watch for side effects. And you need to evaluate the quality of care and to speak up when you have concerns.

Find the right doctor. Not every doctor has the skills, interest and patience to treat people with Alzheimer's disease. Look for doctors who specialize in geriatric medicine. They are trained to deal with the physical and emotional needs of older people and their caregivers.

Do your homework. Before you go, put together a list of questions or topics to discuss with the doctor. Ask other family members if they have anything to add. When you're with the doctor, ask all the questions on your list and write down the answers so you can refer to them at home. Going to the doctor can be stressful. It is easy to forget what you were told. The patient, the family and the doctor are supposed to work as a team, but many people don't always communicate as well as they should. Patients and their families may make things seem better or worse than they really are. Busy doctors may not always take the time to make sure you understand everything you need to know. To get the best care, you must learn how to communicate effectively with your loved one's doctor.

Bring along all medications. Letting the doctor see exactly what medications your loved one is taking can be helpful, especially if this is your first visit. Include vitamin supplements and over-the-counter medications as well as prescription drugs.

Report medication allergies and problems with dosing. The doctor needs to know both the name of the medication and the type of reaction that occurred. Does your loved one tend to forget doses or take too much?

Keep a record of symptoms. Jot down a description of any symptoms you observe and the date you first noticed them. You may alert the doctor to a problem that can be treated or solved.

Be honest. To make appropriate treatment decisions, the doctor



needs to know how the person with Alzheimer's is really doing. This can be difficult when the patient can't speak for him or herself. For this reason, it's important to be as truthful as you can about their mental state and the changes you observed over time. Don't hesitate to describe all the problem behaviors and day to day challenges that frustrate you. Don't feel embarrassed or humiliated.

Speak privately when necessary. When you have concerns that you don't want to discuss in front of your loved one, alert the nurse. She can then arrange to take your loved one out of the room for lab tests or paperwork, giving you a chance to talk privately to the doctor.

Trust your judgment. The doctor may be an expert on Alzheimer's disease, but no one knows the patient better than you. If something doesn't make sense, ask the doctor to explain it again. By speaking up, you can help the doctor find the solutions that work best.

Although there is currently no cure for Alzheimer's disease, recent advances have made treatments available for some of the common symptoms associated with the dis-

ease. These medications may be given in the early to moderate stages of Alzheimer's. Some of these medications work across a range of symptoms to maintain and improve memory, judgment, mood, behavior and the ability to perform certain tasks, such as dressing, eating or using the telephone. These medications work by increasing acetylcholine, an important chemical in the brain that is needed for normal functioning. To help you and the doctor follow your relative's progress, keep a diary of any changes you may observe in the symptoms previously stated.

If you would like more information about the "Partnering With Your Doctor" training program and materials, please call 808-591-2771 or visit the Alzheimer's Association-Aloha Chapter office at Ward Warehouse, Building D15.

County Corner

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H A W A I I

You Are Not Alone!

Support services for caregivers on the Big Island are expanding through the cooperation of several local organizations, including Caregivers Helping Other Caregivers (CHOC), The Hawaii Center for Attitudinal Healing (HCAH), Hawaii Caregivers Community Network (HCCN) and the Hawaii County Office of Aging. These agencies are working together to offer monthly and weekly peer support group programs, volunteer respite services, volunteer training, and caregiver workshops.

When a loved one becomes ill or disabled, the lives of friends and family are affected in many ways. While the emotional impact can be felt by everyone, those who find themselves providing daily care, can see their lives change dramatically.

Few of us feel well prepared for the demands of caregiving. Even those with professional experience find that caring for loved ones can present new and unexpected challenges. Many of us face a 24/7 commitment, with little time and energy left over

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County Corner

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for recharging our own batteries or maintaining our own physical, mental, emotional or spiritual well-being.

As caregivers, it is important to find a support system. Seeking out support may be one of the most difficult decisions we make for ourselves and the ones who depend on our care. However, by reaching out for support, we can connect with others who are empathetic to the daily challenges of caregiving, and regain a sense of personal well-being. Gaining consistent support may also make us more forgiving with ourselves and compassionate toward those we care for.

If you are caring for a loved one; have been a caregiver and would like to help others by sharing your experience; are interested in improving your own life through service; or would simply like to learn more about available programs in the community, please contact Jan McCurry of CHOC at 808-329-0767 or 345-7206 (e-mail: alohajan@hotmail.com) regarding:

- Monthly caregiver's support group:

Kona Adult Day Center; 81-989 Halekii St., Kealahou; 4th Tuesday of each month; 7:00 - 8:30 pm.

- The Caregiver Respite Program on the Big Island.

Please contact Trish Ellis of the Hawaii Center for Attitudinal Healing at 808-322-9503 or 888-222-7205 (from other islands) (e-mail: NetAttHeal@aol.com) regarding:

- Weekly Caregiver's Support Group At The Regency at Hualalai; 75-181 Hualalai Road, Kailua-Kona; Thursdays, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.
- Other weekly support group (for adults in other highly stressful circumstances). Mondays, 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm in the Keauhou area.
- Support groups at other locations and on other islands.
- Volunteer training: April in Hilo; May in Kona
- Caregiver workshops.

MAUI

Maui County Office on Aging and Caregiver Support

In an effort to provide support to the lives and homes of family caregivers, the Maui County Office on Aging (MCOA) has contracted with CareTrust Publications, LLC, to publish monthly *The Comfort of Home* newsletters. Since September of 2004, these newsletters, filled with educational, inspirational, anecdotal and fun articles, have been mailed to family caregivers who have attended past caregiver conferences and seminars. The mailing list is growing, as family caregivers suggest to other caregivers that they "should get it!" The newsletter's mission is simply stated as "Caring for YOU.....caring for OTHERS." MCOA staff note that many calls come into the intake phone lines with the caller starting off their conversation saying "I saw the newsletter..." or "my friend said that there is a newsletter..." or "I would like more information on the newsletter..." It appears that this publication has opened up a new opportunity to offer support to and

to be supportive of family caregivers.

K A U A ' I

Support Group Starts on Kaua'i

The Lihue Neighborhood Caregiver's Support Group, Kaua'i's newest group, got underway on the morning of February 11, 2005. Attendees celebrated an early Valentine's Day, getting to know each other and swapping stories regarding common problems encountered in caring for their family members.



Neva Olson, facilitator (left) and participant Gladys Fujiuchi after a Caregivers Support Group meeting on Kaua'i in February.

The informal group met in donated space at a health careers center. This location gave them access to an adjacent classroom with a hospital bed and other healthcare equipment available to learn care techniques, such as wheelchair safety. When questioned as to what goals they most wanted to accomplish by attending the support group, some answered that just being with fellow caregivers who understand and supported them was most helpful. Others mentioned learning tips on handling care problems. There was also an interest in staying informed regarding any upcoming legislative possibilities for providing better caregiver support in Hawaii.

A common problem was finding dependable respite from caregiving, even to attend the support group. So, after some discussion the members decided to try meeting on a Saturday morning, when other family members

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Tax Tips for Family Caregivers

by Cecily Slater, CPA

April 15 will probably never win any prizes as a favorite day for most Americans. As a caregiver, however, you may find that you are entitled to deductions or credits that can help take some of the sting out of the dreaded tax day. Tax rules change, so take these tips as a guide, but always check with a tax professional when you are getting ready to file.

Medical Expense Deductions – General Principles. For a deduction to qualify as a medical expense, you must have spent money to alleviate or prevent a physical or mental defect or illness. Common deductions include:

- Medical insurance premiums (unless pre-tax)
- Prescription medicines
- Doctor's bills
- Hospital fees for services and/or room and board
- Travel to and from medical appointments

You can deduct only medical and dental expenses that are in excess of 7.5% of your adjusted gross income (AGI). For example, if your AGI is \$25,000 and your medical expenses add up to \$2,000, you will be able to deduct only \$125. That's the difference between the \$2,000 you spent and \$1,875, which is 7.5% of \$25,000.

There's another catch—you can deduct only those amounts for which you have not been reimbursed by private insurance or Medicare. If you are in the upper tax brackets, some itemized deductions are phased out altogether. However, deductible medical expenses are not subject to this reduction.

Special Expenses. You can claim the following special items as medical deductions:

- Oxygen and oxygen equipment
- Special schools or homes for the mentally or physically disabled (when recommended by a doctor)
- Artificial limbs
- False teeth

- Eyeglasses
- Wheelchairs and repairs
- Crutches
- Costs and care of guide dogs for aiding the disabled
- Braille books and magazines if they are more expensive than regular books and magazines
- Hearing aids and the batteries to operate them



You can also deduct expenses for equipment or improvements you've made to your home for medical reasons, but the IRS will reduce these deductions by the amount such improvement increase the value of your home. Typical equipment and improvements added initially for medical reasons include:

- Ramps
- Widened doorways and hallways
- Grab bars in bathrooms
- Elevators, stair glides, etc.
- Air conditioning
- Accessible shower stalls

Unfortunately, health club dues and dancing or swimming lessons are not deductible, even if recommended by a doctor.

Nursing Home Care. Nursing home expenses, per se, are not deductible, but medical expenses incurred in a nursing home are. This includes the cost of meals and lodging while the patient is in the nursing home, so long as the main reason for being there is to get medical (not simply personal) care.

Nursing, Therapeutic, and/or Aide Services. Wages you pay for an attendant who provides nursing and/or personal care services are deductible as medical expenses. These services include such nursing activities as giving medication and

changing dressings, and typical personal care services such as bathing and grooming the patient.

If you provide room and board, these may also be deductible, but typical household services such as cooking and cleaning do not qualify as medical deductions.

For Whom Can You Claim Medical Deductions? You can take medical expense deductions for yourself, your spouse and your dependents. A person generally qualifies as a dependent for medical expense deductions they meet all of the following criteria:

- Is related to you.
- Lived with you for the entire year as member of your household.
- Is a U.S. citizen or resident, or a resident of Canada or Mexico, for at least part of the calendar year for which you are filing taxes.
- You provided over half of that person's total support for the calendar year. If you and someone else are providing more than half a dependent's support, but no one alone provides more than half, you can use what's called a "multiple support agreement" to claim the dependent, but only if one of the parties to the multiple support agreement can claim medical expenses for the dependent person. In the case of divorced parents, however, the child is considered a dependent of both parents for the medical expense deduction.

Where To Get Help. Tax law is confusing at best. If you want additional information, here are ways to get it:

The Internal Revenue Service offers a number of publications that can help you understand the deductions and tax credits you may be entitled to. To order these publications, call 1-800-TAX-FORM. Some of the most helpful include:

- Your Federal Income Tax: Publication 17
- Medical and Dental Expenses: Publication 502
- Credit for the Elderly or Disabled: Publication 554
- Tax Rules for Children and Dependents: Publication 929

The IRS will also answer taxpayer
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Tutu's Corner

Hi'i Na Kupuna's Kincare Caregiver Survey

Hi'i Na Kupuna is Maui's Grandparents Coalition. Co-facilitated by the Maui County Office on Aging and the University of Hawai'i - CTAHR/Cooperative Extension Service, Maui Office, the Coalition is becoming a uniquely comprehensive collaboration of programs and groups that are united in resolve. What the coalition

Tax Tips for Family Caregivers

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questions if they are not too complicated or controversial. But you must realize, while the IRS will try to guide you in finding the answers you need, it does not offer tax advice. To find the Taxpayer Service Number for your area, check the local phone book under the IRS listings.

There is only one place to go for individual tax advice, and that is to a tax professional. If you are confused about what deductions or credits may apply to you, or if you need help preparing your return, you may find it beneficial to consult someone who specializes in this area. There are a number of tax services available, and you can find their numbers in the phone book, but the best reference may well be word of mouth. Talk to people you know and respect, and ask them for a referral.

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resolves is to enhance the formal and informal supports for grandparents who are now raising (parenting) their grandchildren due to the absence of one or more parent. What is happening on Maui is really a synergy of ideas, creativity, resource development and capacity-building.

The Coalition is working to administer its Caregiver Survey to family caregivers, kincare caregivers and

grandparents within the next three months. The results of the survey will allow the Coalition to move ahead with its plans to offer grandparenting support groups. The Coalition is designing a support group program that is adjunctive to the support group program now being delivered on Maui by the Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center (QLCC). QLCC is a member of the coalition.

Together with Good Beginnings Maui, the Coalition is also working to put into place a resource and training center and traveling program. The Neighborhood Place of Wailuku and Hui Malama Learning Center

are helping to make this operational. Hi'i Na Kupuna is also participating in the Hawai'i Caregivers Coalition (HCC), with at least one member serving on each of the HCC's committees.

For more information about Hi'i Na Kupuna, please call Kaulana Keala, Extension Educator, at 808-244-4242, or e-mail her at kaulanak@hawaii.edu.

Testimony Supporting Caregiver Legislation

This testimony is re-printed with permission by its author, Ms. Lorinda Waltz, who submitted written comments to the Senate Committee on Human Services. Ms. Waltz's testimony is in response to S.B. No. 560, which appropriates funds to the Executive Office on Aging to expand eldercare programs and services, including caregiver support services, and to S.B. No. 561, which establishes a Caregiver Coordinator position in the Executive Office on Aging.

To: Senate Committee on Human Services
From: Mrs. Lorinda Waltz, Family Caregiver
Date: February 6, 2005
Subject: SB 560 & 561/Relating to the

Elderly. (Hearing to be held on February 8, 2005 at 2:45 pm)

For many years, I did intense family caregiving for both my parents, and I could not have maintained their health and emotional well-being as long as I did had I not had the assistance of community resources funded in some part by the State of Hawai'i. I had sought out and gratefully accepted the services of case management, home delivered meals, exercise classes for the elderly, caregiver conferences, education classes, tremendous and varied medical assistance through Medicaid, Hospice care, and a wonderful program that specifically supports caregivers

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Medicare Updates

Medicare Part D - Prescription Drug Benefit. We are sure that you have heard about the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit (also called Medicare Part D), but you may not be aware of the big change this will be for everyone involved in health care. If you have questions, don't be alarmed; so does everyone else. Hawai'i's Part D Coalition will have information available on the Executive Office on Aging's website under the Sage PLUS Program by April 1, 2005.

The basic Medicare Part D - Prescription Drug Program will be available to all Medicare members in January 2006, and is as follows:

- \$35 monthly premium (approx.)
- \$250 deductible (each year, beneficiary pays 100%)
- 25% of drug costs from \$250 to \$2,250 (so beneficiary pays \$500), Medicare pays 75%
- 100% of drug costs from \$2,250 to \$5,100 (so beneficiary pays \$2,850)

County Corner

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were more likely to be available and might be able to help them.

Neva Olson, facilitator for the group and Coordinator for the Caregiver Counseling and Training program on Kaua'i, has plans to start up at least two more neighborhood support groups in other geographical areas of the island. She has found that Kaua'i caregivers prefer to meet in small neighborhood groups, not far from their homes, rather than in one large centralized group.

The next meeting of the Lihue Neighborhood Caregiver's Support Group will be held Saturday, March 12, 10:00 to 11:30 am, at the offices of Kaua'i Health Careers Training, 4375 Puaole St., Lihue (next to St. Michaels Church). Any person caring for an older family member at home, full-time or part-time, is invited to attend. For more information, to attend this meeting or to help start a small group in Kapaa or Waimea, please call Neva Olson at 808-821-8049.

Do you have questions about the new Medicare Part D (prescription drug) benefit?

Join our Medicare Part D Coalition and receive up-to-date information for Hawai'i. This project is a collaborative effort of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Hawai'i Department of Health, Department of Human Services, and the Social Security Administration.

To join our community effort or for more information, call the Sage PLUS Program at 586-7299 or 1-888-875-9229.

- After \$3,600 in beneficiary out of pocket costs (\$250+\$500+\$2,850), beneficiary pays 5% and Medicare pays 95%

These plans will be offered by private companies. Enrollment is November 15, 2005 through May 15, 2006. We will know how many plans and who will be offering them in Hawai'i by October 15, 2005.

There will also be assistance available to those with limited income and assets. Applications for assistance will be available in May 2005. There will be several levels of assistance available:

1. Full benefit dual eligibles—full benefit dual eligibles are individuals who are entitled to Medicare Part A and/or Part B and are also eligible for outpatient prescription drug benefits through Medicaid.
2. Groups eligible for low-income subsidies—three groups have been identified for lower-income assistance (subsidies)

Group 1

Full benefit dual eligibles with incomes below 100 percent of the Federal poverty level (FPL) (*see box, right*), with resource limits of not more than \$2,000 per individual and \$3,000 for a married couple.

- No monthly premium or the deductible;
- Co-payments: \$1 for generics and \$3 for brand-name drugs;
- If through paying these nominal copays and the beneficiary reaches \$3,600 in out-of-pocket costs, they are not responsible for any other co-pays for the rest of the year.

Note: Full benefit dual eligibles in nursing homes will have no cost sharing.

Group 2

Full benefit dual eligibles and non-dual eligible Medicare beneficiaries with incomes between 100 percent and 135 percent of the FPL, with resource limits of \$6,000 per individual and \$9,000 for a married couple.

- No monthly premium or the deductible;
- Co-payments: \$2 for generic drugs and \$5 for brand-name drugs;
- If through paying these nominal copays and the beneficiary reached \$3,600 in out-of-pocket costs, they are not responsible for any other co-pays for the rest of the year.

Group 3

Medicare beneficiaries with incomes between 135 percent and 150 percent of the FPL, with resource limits of \$10,000 for an individual and \$20,000 for a married couple.

- Monthly premium based on a sliding scale depending upon income;
- Reduced deductible of \$50/year;
- Responsible for 15 percent of the cost of prescriptions up to the \$3,600 out-of-pocket maximum;
- Once maximum reached, co-payments are \$2 for generic drugs and \$5 for brand-name drugs for the rest of the year.

For more information, call the Sage PLUS Program at 586-7299 or toll-free at 1-888-875-9229.

2005 Hawaii Federal Poverty Levels

Individuals:

100% FPL = \$11,010
135% FPL = \$14,863.50
150% FPL = \$16,515

Couples:

100% FPL = \$14,760
135% FPL = \$19,926
150% FPL = \$22,140

Testimony Supporting Caregiver Legislation

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like myself, called Project Dana/Caring for the Caregiver. With both my parents ailing as badly as they were, I was not able to work, and the demands on my time with their care-

**THOSE OF US WHO VOTED
FOR YOU ARE COUNTING ON
YOU TO BRING OUR ISSUES TO
THE TABLE AND PROVIDE
THE MEANS TO LIVE LIFE
WITH QUALITY.**

giving left little time to even give attention to my own husband and son. They were so understanding of the sacrifices we all made to care for my parents.



I readily admit that it was a daily struggle to care for two elderly people on a full time basis. Their chronic ailments of Parkinson's disease, diverticulitis, Alzheimer's, diabetes, and other symptoms of failing health (*i.e.* incontinence, insomnia, hearing and vision loss) were almost more than I could handle. The strain was so great, had I not had the help from

these community services, especially that of Project Dana, I think I would have suffered even more than I already had on an emotional and physical level.

I sent in testimony last year on bills and was greatly disappointed that the needs of the elderly and the large population of family caregivers did not receive adequate recognition, and therefore, funding of support programs by our State Legislators. I find it hard to understand why this is so, as no doubt many of your lives have, will be or are presently being touched by family caregiving situations. Those of us who voted for you are counting on you to bring our issues to the table and provide the means to live life with quality. Please do not ignore these high profile issues. They will not go away; they are only predicted to worsen.

I urge you to pass SB 560 & 561 to assist the elderly through programs that would help them remain as independent as possible, but equally important, to assist family caregivers to do the same for them.

Māhalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

E LOA KE OLA



Executive Office on Aging
No. 1 Capitol District
250 South Hotel Street, Suite 406
Honolulu, HI 96813

MAY LIFE BE LONG